THE SANTA CLAUSE

DCMC's FLIGHT OPERATIONS INTERNET NEWS LETTER, EDITION X-**MAS**
December 16 1998

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Ho, Ho, Ho... Merry Christmas, Happy Hanukah, Joyous Kwansa, Feliz Navidad, and Spectacular Solstice. I guess that about covers all bases, so welcome to this *special Holiday* edition of the Santa (re: Safety) Clause. It's been over two weeks since our last edition, and so much has happened since then that I felt another edition was unavoidable, I mean possible. As an added bonus, and in keeping with the Christmas spirit, you'll find Yule tidings sprinkled throughout the newsletter. They're just further examples of the lengths we, at DCMC-AF, go to maximize your reading enjoyment.

If you were fortunate enough to read Edition IX of the Clause, you'll remember I added sound bites in the form of *.wav files that most readers' computers couldn't decode. Sorry about that. I'm still trying to figure that one out. To further your reading experience in the future, I'll try to include video-clip files your computer can't decode either.

Let's see... Saddam Hussein (Naughty) — Coal— Check.
Sarah Michelle Gellar (Very Nice)— Upcoming movie role— Check.
Paul Shevlin. Looks like he still hasn't written any Safety Clause articles (Naughty, naughty) — Coal— Check!

FYI -Lt Col John Heib

As we mentioned two weeks ago, our new office symbol will be DCMC-AF. The new symbol takes effect 1 January, as far as we know... nobody tells us anything. Anyway, as our way of celebrating the holidays, feel free to start using -AF today. Yes, it's yet another free bonus extended to only our most valuable

customers (a term we reserve for anyone who reads the Clause). The special *holiday bonus* is made possible because virtually everyone in the U.S. is either on leave, participating in an office door decorating contest, planning the office Christmas party, raising money to defray the cost of the office Christmas party, attending the office Christmas party, or recovering from said party, so who's going to notice that you jumped the gun on calling us -AF?

By the way, if you have the chance during your copious down time between the activities listed above, you should take the time to update your mishap response plan with the new office symbol. Just replace any occurrences of DCMC-OI, -PI, AQOI, AQCOI, DCMC-QF, DLA-QF, or DQMSO-S, depending on exactly how long it's been since you did your last update, with DCMC-AF.

CORRECTIONS

Normally, due to the infallible nature of the Safety Clause, we don't carry a Corrections section. However, we recently published an article on Casualty Notifications which contained several falsehoods that the author, who shall remain anonymous (editor's note: Don't mention Lt Col Russ Waddell), slipped by us. The AFPC casualty web page listed in the article is no longer active: "afpc.randolph.af.mil/casualty/your.htm". However, the Commander's guide is still available at "www.afpc.randolph.af.mil/casualty/training.htm", and additional information is in the CAR area at "www.afpc.randolph.af.mil/casualty/cararea.htm".

REINDEER MISHAP NEWS

-Lt Col John Heib

We've experience a number of mishaps in the past few months. And, following a painstaking statistical analysis, we were able to determine scientifically that the causal factors fell neatly into two categories:

Category 1- something that was supposed to work, didn't

Category 2- what Webster succinctly refers to as feats-of-galactic-stupidity

Our first example from category two, is rated "O" for ouch! A contractor employee working underneath a B-2 had his ring finger non-surgically removed from his left hand when he jumped down from a workstand instead of using the ladder. His ring, and finger, remained attached to the aircraft at the forward up-lock point of the nose landing gear (NLG) door. Ouch! (I warned you.) That's got to hurt.

Next, an electrician and a technician were at a bar... oops, sorry, wrong story. An electrician and a technician *were servicing the air conditioning system on a T-34C*. The electrician was in the front cockpit with electrical power applied. The technician was checking aircraft exterior lighting systems. The technician noted that the left main landing gear light and the external gear down indicator light were inoperative. He mentioned this to the electrician who noted that all four landing gear circuit breakers (CBs) were out. Assuming the circuit breaker pixies (or CBPs) had left the CBs pulled, probably as a practical joke, the electrician reset them. At which point the landing gear motor began to run. It was at *this point* that something happened that we

in the safety field call "a very bad thing". The nose gear passed over center and allowed the nose of the aircraft to slowly settle to the hangar deck (deck being Navy-speak for floor), damaging two propeller blades and the nose landing gear doors. They say there's a thousand stories in the Naked City; there's also a few to be found here... "Circuit Breakers – Friend or Foe?" and, "An Idiot's Guide to Landing Gear Handles," come quickly to mind. Not exactly best sellers, but well worth reading. (Total damage ~$7,150)

In news from the scientific front, a forklift driver's attempt to demonstrate the quantum wave property of matter, which allows two distinct particles of matter to occupy the same space simultaneously, was apparently unsuccessful. An independent panel speculated that the C-5A left hand horizontal stabilizer outboard wingtip and the forklift failed to "wave merge" as predicted by quantum theory, due to the extreme temperatures present during the experiment, 313.15° Kelvin or 72° Fahrenheit. The forklift driver's thermometer was evidently inoperative, leading the driver to erroneously believe the temperature was closer to .000005 above absolute zero, which would allow the merging to take place. Either that, or he wasn't paying attention when he smashed into the wingtip that had been removed for PDM. (Total damage ~$40,000)

Charlie, Hold that bogie pitch light steady, darn it! I'm trying to adjust the brake torque compensator link on the gudgeon pin.

The following narrative came from another C-5A mishap report. During a high speed taxi check of a functional check flight of C-5A. Per the checklist, the aircrew applied the brakes at 40 knots and noticed a "right forward bogie pitch light" followed by a "DET fail light" (anti-skid failure). The crew looked at the area through the inspection window and spotted fluid on the outboard tire. The aircraft was taxied off the runway to deplane a scanner, who discovered structural damage to the #2 main landing gear. Upon further inspection, maintenance personnel discovered several brake lines were ruptured, the #2 MLG gudgeon pin sheared and the brake torque compensator link assembly had come loose. Am I the only one who finds this narrative a little suspicious? "Bogie pitch light?" "Gudgeon pin?" I don't think so. If you guys don't know the proper names of the aircraft parts, don't just make something up like these guys did.

Another "braking" related mishap occurred during the land phase of the initial F-15 ACF. The aircraft touched down at approximately 140 KIAS. During landing rollout the pilot applied maximum braking at approximately 115 KIAS, to check the anti-skid system and longitudinal deceleration per the checklist. Black smoke was observed coming from the aircraft by flight operations personnel. Brakes became ineffective almost immediately; OK, so maximum is probably not the correct adjective to use to describe the braking. Anyway, at this point the

mishap board speculates the pilot's life passed before his eyes, including that embarrassing incident during his senior prom that we won't get into right now. Fortunately the pilot was able to muster all the skill one would expect from someone with a leather jacket, and safely brought the aircraft to rest on centerline, roughly aligned with the runway, at which time he shutdown the engines. Post-flight inspection revealed that the left main tire was missing and the right main tire was bulls-eyed and blown. The left main landing gear wheel assembly was damaged beyond repair. An operational check of the aircraft's anti-skid system found failures in the anti-skid control box, and the dual brake control valve. (Total damages ~$11,900) In other *braking*[1] news, an F-16 pilot experience aircraft brake failure following an FCF sortie. The pilot was quoted as saying, 'The aircraft showed very little braking capabilities, and the brakes were ineffective during landing roll.' He also mentioned something about missing this week's episode of Buffy the Vampire Slayer, but the mishap board concluded that missing the show was not a causal factor in the mishap sequence since it was a rerun. The aircraft experienced $24,000 in damages. The barrier... did I mentioned he engaged the barrier? No? OK, he engaged the barrier. It required $1,000 in repairs.

[1]Puns-R-Us©

The following incident could have been prevented if "Buddy Lee— MAN OF ACTION" had not been busy making commercials or something. While a C-9 aircraft was being towed off the scales following a weight and balance check, the left tow bar attach pin sheared. This allowed the aircraft to roll down the ramps towards the scales in what one bystander described as, "a standard runaway nightingale maneuver." Fortunately, the company's mascot, a French poodle named FiFi, was riding the brakes (in accordance with the GFR approved Contractor's Procedures). FiFi quickly engaged the aircraft's brakes saving the day. Unfortunately, I made that last part up (OK... I kind of stole the idea from a Gary Larson cartoon so sue me.). There was in fact, no French poodle riding the brakes, and, as mentioned earlier, Buddy Lee— MAN OF ACTION, was absent, probably due to an autograph signing stint. With both FiFi and Buddy mysteriously unavailable, the aircraft continued to roll unimpeded; that is, until it was suddenly *impeded* by the hangar doors. The hangar doors *impeded* the left and right elevators on the tail of the aircraft to the tune of $17,250.

Pilot to Co-pilot— Is it just me, or do you smell the acrid odor typical of overheated electrical materials coming from the right wheel well?

During a routine acceptance check flight, a fire occurred in the right main wheel well of a KC-10. The fire damage was centralized around the #1 auxiliary hydraulic pump, cannon plug connector, and wire harness bundle. The interesting thing about this particular incident is *the fire was not detected until the following morning during a routine preflight*. The Air Force has concluded its investigation of this serious incident and has instituted procedural changes that should prevent a reoccurrence. But I've read the final report, and off the record, I don't think the mishap board did a thorough enough investigation. They never

addressed the burning philosophical question, "If a fire occurs onboard your aircraft, and it isn't discovered until the following morning, did you have an emergency?" (Total damages ~$78,400)

Historically, DCMC Flight Ops experiences a mishap involving an unplanned hangar sprinkler system activation *at least* once a year. In the most recent case, two F-15s were located under the sprinkler system with their canopies open for equipment installation and system checkouts. The suspected cause of the inadvertent sprinkler system activation was due to obstructions from corrosion build-up in the priming line check valve and other trim devices. These obstructions prevented the sprinkler system from compensating for pressure changes caused by a main fire water line break and fire pump activation. This incident cost the taxpayers about $74,000... that's right, almost enough to pay for one pilot's bonus! The corrective actions included such high tech approaches as closing canopies on aircraft not being worked on and covering aircraft when the canopies are removed. Additionally, the contractor's sprinkler system maintenance program was changed to include an internal inspection of the sprinkler system's valves and lines for excess corrosion once every 5 years. In lieu of instituting such *Draconian* procedural reforms at your contractor's facility, please feel free to contact us, and we'll send you an electronic copy of the mishap report which you can conveniently use following your sprinkler system's malfunction. Just make sure you change the date on the report before you send it out. (WARNING: The editors of this newsletter wish to apologize to those readers who have mistaken the above recommendation on how to deal with the consequences of mishaps of this nature by simply rewriting a previously filed mishap report, as anything but sarcasm. Instituting procedural changes to mitigate the risk of damage from sprinkler systems is, in fact, the process we recommend. To prevent further misunderstandings we are implementing institutional changes to purge any remaining sarcasm from the rest of this newsletter... yeah right!)

This year, we experienced two Outrider UAV flight mishaps within several weeks of each other. In both cases the *aircraft* operators deviated from approved procedures when they decided not to deploy the emergency parachute recovery system. There were no serious injuries during either mishap, although one operator reported spilling coffee on his simulated leather jacket. Fortunately, it was decaffeinated.

I recently received the following startling news in an initial mishap notification report. During retrofit of a NATO E-3A AWACS, a coolant leak developed in the main EGW system. Now normally, this would not be a problem. However, in this case, the coolant leaked into the SF6 system, which contaminated the high voltage equipment in the lower lobe. And since I didn't even know that E-3As had lower lobes, and I can't tell my EGW from my SF6, I became very concerned. But as luck would have it, the aircraft was on the ground at the time. The leak occurred after the coolant pumps were inadvertently left on while the ground crew left for lunch... Damn those Union rules! The leak was contained to mission-equipment (meaning it didn't interfere with the workers' lunches) and did not affect the aircraft flight systems. The aircraft was flown to Geilenkirchen (located south of GlittertindenvilleEGWSF6kjavikstan) for repair. Tear down of the klystron unit revealed a coolant hose that had become disconnected from the nipple. Upon further

investigation, it was also determined that nobody knows what EGW stands for, and there really is a place called Geilenkirchen, though no one knows how to pronounce it.

The Little CH-53E Engine That Could. Once upon a time their was a CH-53E engine *with no previous experiences of engine FOD,* that could... until it ingested something shortly after takeoff. The crew experienced an immediate performance degradation to and subsequent failure of the number 2 engine. Again demonstrating why we give aircrews leather jackets, the crew landed their crippled (or performance challenged) helicopter without incident. Post flight inspection revealed significant FOD damage to the outboard and leading edges of the first, second, and third stage compressor blades, fortunately limited to the number two engine. Investigators suspect either a fairing bolt or a pumpkin that inadvertently crossed over from another children's book. Several corrective actions are planned including, briefing the FOD incident at next safety stand-down, and reviewing the inspection criteria for areas in the vicinity of engine inlets. (total damages ~$80,000)

There was some very sad news in the P-3C community; during a routine engine run up, the left wing outboard leading edge separated from the aircraft. No divorce proceedings are scheduled, but an Orion family spokesperson stated that the separation was due to unreconcilable differences. Damage was limited to the wing's leading edge panel, and totaled $13,410.

And finally, tragedy hit home for kids everywhere after it was reported that Santa's sleigh crashed during a routine FCF. The FCF was required following routine maintenance on the sleigh's Hot Cocoa dispenser (see FAA Service Bulletin 98-345A). The *sleigh*crew which safely ejected prior to impact, had reported to North Pole Center that they were experiencing catastrophic failures in at least three of the team's eight tiny reindeer. Attempts to land the sleigh were hampered by Rudolph's shiny nose which caused the mission pilot (MP) to experience an unrecoverable visual illusion between the Red Nosed Reindeer (RNR) and the nonstandard Christmas tree lights used the line Runway 00 at the North Pole. The National Transportation Safety Board is focusing its investigation on the possibility of contaminated feed. The NTSB will also be looking into the possibility that the pilot's visual illusion may have been exacerbated by his use of Viagra within 6 hours of the flight. Viagra has been shown to affect color vision, possibly impairing the MP ability to distinguish between blue and green.

SSgt Pen and Airman Guin prepare to load a C-141 with presents as the Air Force lends a hand to Santa following yesterday's sleigh mishap.

SANTA ANSWERS LETTERS FROM THE TRENCHES

Our first question comes from Major Gaines Johnston, DCMC Pemco.

The Washington ANG called us and wanted to know if we could perform an FCF on an airplane for them. The airplane had some fuel/fuel system malfunction and has been grounded at Meridian, MS, for the past several months. They contracted with Raytheon to fix the jet and it should be ready in a week or so. Capt Lee Kempffer said he thought of us because we've delivered quite a few of their airplanes for them, and it's a KC-135E and not many people are qualified in the 135E. His main concern is sending a crew from Fairchild AFB, WA, to fly the jet, and then find that it's not ready. It would be very expensive for them, and they have a lot of people deployed. Meridian is only 2 hours drive time from here, so we're a lot more flexible. Of course, they will be paying the bills.

I've talked it over with Lt Col Costello (Commander, DCMC Pemco). He wanted me to consult with you and see if you could see a reason why we couldn't do it. We only have one jet this month. Logistically, there's no problem. This is very similar to when we flew an OC-135B for AFMC that needed an FCF/delivery from Wright Patterson to AMARC. Do you know of any rule or instruction (or if it's just not smart) that would preclude us from doing this?

District East's CFO, Lt Col Mike Clover, (who, we have on very good authority from his kids, is really Santa) responded,

Request Approved. Your primary role as DLA aircrew members is to perform flight acceptance duties to the governing contract and DLA procedures. As such, DLAM 8220.3 does not prohibit flying the requested sortie. However, it does address several areas that I strongly recommend you emphasize before flying this mission: Flight Acceptance Personnel Requirements (Para. 2-3), Flight Operating Areas (Para 2-10), Flight Acceptance Profiles (Para. 3-3), Fuel Requirements (Para. 3-4), Weather Requirements (Para. 3-6), Mission Briefing (Para. 3-8). Also critical is a full maintenance review of the aircraft's past fuel/fuel system discrepancies, in addition to, close coordination with the Guard unit at Meridian, MS.

BOTTOMLINE: I know Team Pemco is Ready, Willing, and Able — Fully capable of performing this FCF mission. I only wish that I was KC-135E qualified too. Enjoy the flight!

We recently received an inquiry from the field concerning experimental aircraft. The text that follows is a reprint of Col Falvey's letter to the District CFOs addressing this subject.

Recent questions have arisen concerning when and where passengers are allowed onboard aircraft operating under Ground and Flight Risk (DFARS 252-228-7001), administered by Government Flight Representatives (GFRs), or under the Tri-Service Agreement on Procedures for Support/Accomplishment of Flight Test and Acceptance, Flight Operations, and Flight Safety, overseen by the DCMC CAO Chiefs of Flight Operations (CFOs). The following is intended to clarify the roles of the GFRs and CFOs in the area of passenger operations and orientation flights.

The Tri-Service instruction, Contractor's Flight and Ground Operations, DLAM

8210.1, NAVAIRINST 3710.1C, AFJI 10-220V1, and AR 95-20, Vol. 1, prohibits passengers flights on experimental test missions. The following is an excerpt from the instruction:

> 3-9. Passenger Transportation Procedures. This area includes Procedures for submitting contractor personnel or other passenger transportation requests, including orientation flights, on Government aircraft through the GFR to the appropriate military command for approval. Passengers are restricted from the following types of flights: experimental test flights; engineering flights; acceptance, functional, maintenance test, or production check flights.

In the opinion of DCMC-*AF*, until an aircraft begins its normal production line run, it is inherently an "experimental aircraft" and its flights can not be identified as anything other than flights that fall into the passenger prohibited list. At this point in the procurement cycle the Services haven't even decided on the final configuration of the aircraft. Although the owning Service could waive this regulatory restriction, we would highly discourage any DCMC GFR from approving such a flight or in any other way involving themselves with such an unnecessarily risky use of the aircraft.

In addition, DCMC CFOs have no role in approving flights of this nature. CFO approved passenger flights are limited to pickup/delivery, or special support flights IAW DLAM 8220.3, 2-13 and 3-17. Neither of these references authorize CFO approval of passenger flights onboard experimental aircraft.

Orientation flights are only authorized IAW DAM 8220.3, 2-13 d., if, "...the DPRO Commander determines it is in the interest of DCMC to perform the mission." DCMC-*AF* cannot envision a scenario in which passenger flights onboard experimental aircraft would be in the interest of DCMC.

Hypothetically, DLA rules for "Other Flights" (i.e. those flight not specifically allowed by 8220.3) could be considered applicable in this case. However, authority of these exceptional flights rests with DCMC-*AF*. Needless to say, DCMC-*AF* would not approve such flights under any circumstances.

Since the Services, not DLA or DCMC, own these aircraft, they have the final word on who flies onboard them. In the event they opt to overrule DCMC's CAS oversight of flight operations, they then could do as they wish with their aircraft. This would require a statement, in writing, to the DCMC Commander, Major General Timothy P. Malishenko, to the effect that the Service is withdrawing DCMC's CAS authority over the contract and contractor for the duration of the flight. This would remove the GFR and/or CFO from any responsibilities or roles in the flight planning, approval, preflight, postflight, and if necessary mishap reporting/investigation processes.

In conclusion, the GFR's primary responsibility is to represent the Government to ensure safe and effective contractor flight and ground

operations. The CFO's primary responsibility is to ensure all flight operations at contractor facilities involving Service aircrews (assigned to DCMC or otherwise) are conducted in a safe and effective manner consistent with procedures and policies of the parent Services and the Tri-Service Agreement. Passenger flights onboard experimental aircraft are incompatible with GFR and CFO duties.

The following from CW5 Bill Young, DCMC Boeing Philadelphia, concerns an unusual situation they've found themselves in concerning flying, so called, "civil aircraft". In this case, CH-47s purchased under a direct buy from the manufacturer to a NATO country. Many of you will find yourselves in similar circumstances in the coming years... are the C-17 guys listening?

I was told by my deputy commander, to pursue my FAA physical. I indeed did what I was told, and now I am the proud owner of an FAA Medical certificate. My question to you is twofold. Since I am flying a "civil aircraft" in the performance of my DCMC mission can I use those flight hours toward my semiannual DLAM 8220.3 minimums? And, is my FAA medical certificate valid for use performing acceptance flights since I used a civilian doctor and not a military flight surgeon, since my command was under pressure to meet the new perceived qualifications? What is the latest command position on civil ratings to perform acceptance flights? I think our contractor should have gotten their corporate headquarters to request a waiver in order for customer and DCMC pilots to pursue any new civil qualifications.

Lt Col Mike *Santa* Clover replies,

After reviewing/discussing CW5 Young's e-mail with my Flight Ops Team, I suggest we respond to his questions in the following manner:

Question #1— Counting flying time in the "civil" CH-47 against DCMC proficiency requirements. CONCUR. Rationale: Though DLAM 8220.3 does not specifically address this item, there is an allowance (with GFR approval) for contractor flight crewmembers to substitute 50% of their semi-annual proficiency requirements in another similar Government aircraft, compatible simulator, or a civilian aircraft. (DLAM 8210.1, Vol. 1, Chap. 7, para. 7-1). Since this a unique situation at DCMC Boeing, and the military flight crews would fly CH-47 aircraft, I see no reason not to count the flight time against the DCMC proficiency requirements.

Question #2— FAA medical certificate valid for performing acceptance flights. NONCONCUR. Rationale: DLAM 8220.3 is very specific regarding the use of FAA flight medicine personnel by military aviators. In fact, the use of FAA flight surgeons is not acceptable for annual physicals or for returning crewmembers to flight status. (DLAM 8220.3, Chap. 2, para. 2-17). Per telephone conversation with the Flight Medicine Clinic at Hanscom AFB, military members can obtain their Class II medical certificate at the same time they accomplish their annual flight physicals. There is no charge for this service. Mr. Young obtained his Class II medical certificate to legally fly as a crewmember aboard a "civil" aircraft. This satisfies the FAA medical requirement. However, a Class II medical certificate would not satisfy the military medical requirement when he flies aboard a "public" aircraft.

Question #3--Command position on "civil ratings" to perform acceptance flights. TBD Discussion: The current controversy at DCMC Boeing Helicopter is unique— military crewmembers flying acceptance flights of new aircraft purchased under a civil contract (neither a DoD military or FMS contract). The underlying issue at hand is which FAR definition of aircraft, "civil" or "public", is applicable. If the aircraft are considered civil, then the FAA's pilot qualification rules apply. However, if the aircraft are considered public, then our DCMC military pilots wouldn't need FAA pilot certificates. Depending on which side you listen to, Boeing (civil), or United Kingdom (public), your definition of aircraft varies.

From our perspective, this case has larger ramifications than just the resolution of the current situation in Philadelphia. We believe DCMC must interface with the FAA to clarify/resolve this issue— establish a policy. Long range— as DCMC increases its involvement with CAS of "commercial" contracts (FAR Part 12), we must anticipate problems with the "old" ways of doing business. As an interim measure, the DCMC Boeing flight crewmembers are pursuing their FAA pilot certificates.

Some additional food for thought: If all parties agree these particular aircraft at Boeing are ultimately considered civil, then what about FAA certification of the contractor's aircraft maintenance and inspection personnel? This is uncharted water--it might be just the tip of the iceberg and the lid of a very ugly Pandora's box.

The Pep Boys,
Lt Col Mike Clover, LT Mike Rein, and Mr. Mike Lathrop

There are more hazards in this situation than there are potholes on Summer St. Are the CH-47s truly civil aircraft just because they're purchased under a direct buy? My question to that question is, do these aircraft have "N" tail numbers? Also, if there really are CH-47 civil variants what kind of excess FAA "baggage" does it carry? Exit lighting? Stewardesses? Wait a minute... maybe I need to get one of them "N" tail numbers? Never mind. One thing you have to be very careful about here is the purchase of military hardware by a foreign government. There are some very strict rules on this subject. Rules that apply even to countries that speak English, and doubly for the ones that are not very good at it like England. What does the FMS office have to say about this purchase?

This is one of the many gray areas we talk about in the GFR course. Areas where we don't always have all the answers for. GFRs who find themselves in these tricky situations need to keep all their lines of communication open and keep you CFO informed. We're all going to have to gently feel our way through this uncharted "commercial buy" territory together. And unfortunately, due to recent unpleasant revelations on 60 Minutes, we'll have to do it without the use of one of those $37,000 ARC-2000 aircrew emergency flashlights!

PRE-MISHAP PLAN IN ACTION --LT JIM MAHER, USN

Recently the folks at Sikorsky and DCMC Sikorsky sponsored an extremely successful mishap drill. The after action email message which follows clearly illustrate the importance of these exercises. Readers should pay particular attention to the findings section...would you find similar findings in your Pre-Mishap Plan if you looked today? Kudos to all involved.

On the 29th of October, 1998, at 1000, DCMC Sikorsky conducted a mishap drill which tested Sikorsky's (SAC's) Response to Helicopter Mishaps (SAC procedure PR: 01-02-003), along with DCMC Sikorsky's Mishap Response Plan. Bridgeport Airport served as the site for the off-site mishap drill to test SAC's mishap response from an unfamiliar site.

The objectives of the drill were as follows,

- Test SAC Mishap Response procedures.
- Test DCMC Sikorsky's Mishap Notification procedures.
- Familiarize outside Fire Departments with helicopter mishaps and associated hazards.
- Provide a realistic and safe training opportunity for all involved.

Participants in the Mishap Drill included:

- Sikorsky's Fire Department, Pilots Office, Production Hangar, Control Tower, Product Safety, Guard Headquarters/Security, Medical and Communications Departments.
- DCMC Sikorsky
- Bridgeport Fire Department (approx. 5 trucks, 2 support vehicles, 30 personnel)
- Stratford Fire Department (approx. 4 trucks, 17 personnel)
- Sikorsky Memorial Airport, w/personnel from the following areas: Airport Operations, Tower, Airport Maintenance, Crash Crews (1 crash truck)
- Bridgeport AMR (ambulatory response) (3 ambulances & crews)

A UH-60L Blackhawk served as the mishap aircraft. Overall, the drill was very successful. All objectives were met. A debrief was held at 0900 on 30 October. All groups/departments which participated in the drill were represented. Lots of positive feedback was received in the debrief. Local Fire Departments and ambulatory response got lots of quality training done, particularly with regards to helicopter familiarization.

Lessons Learned included the following:

- Aircraft records were not available to be secured (aircrew took records with them). *Army procedures require crews to take records with them [a future discussion item].*
- DCMC Safety was not notified by contractor Product Safety of the mishap. *Notification required by contractor procedures.*
- Lack of familiarity by off-site medical response teams with regards to the following: Tilt-back feature to aircraft seats, proper removal of helmets (to include disconnecting ICS cords), proper unlocking of lap belts/seat harnesses, location of PCLs and Fuel Selectors. *We'll use additional training to address*

this finding, perhaps conducted via means other than a mishap drill.

- Some unclear guidance/text in DCMC Sikorsky's Mishap Response Plan, mostly administrative. *One fix, give more visibility to the Plans' Priority Page. Also, text will be made clearer as to steps to be taken in the absence of key APT members*

I received an email recently, written by CMSgt John E. Ensor, who works in the Resources and Plans Division, within the ACC Directorate of Security. He was on the Air Forces' most recent CMSgt board. As you'll recall, the last two editions of the Safety Clause contained articles on Officer OPRs and PRFs. I'm hoping CMSgt Ensor's comments on EPRs should conveniently dispel any complaints that the Clause focuses too much on officers. You Army and Navy guys can forward your complaints about the Clause's Air Force focus via email to file@shredder.mil

Chief Ensor's original remarks were in bullet format which I've converted into narratives for consistency. I apologize for anything that was lost in the translation. Here now is Part III in our mistitled two part series on Performance Reports and Promotions.

EVERTHING I NEEDED TO KNOW ABOUT PROMOTIONS I LEARNED ON THE CMSgt PROMOTION BOARD

CMSgt John E. Ensor

I recently sat on the CMSgt evaluation board— a real honor and experience of a life time! Here are some thoughts and observations so you and your bosses are more informed of the board process. Hopefully, this will better prepare you and your troops for future consideration to the top 1 or 2 percent of our Enlisted Corps. The evaluation process reinforced what most Chiefs already know about what it takes to get their people promoted. What was quickly apparent is the need for this information to reach your supervisors— raters, raters' raters, and senior raters. Let's face it, the board process evaluates your records... a compilation of accomplishments and achievements that are captured in written form. Who has direct input into these records? A few enlisted supervisors but mostly the officers and their civilian counterparts, you work for. As one Colonel who sat on this board said, "We need to get the word out to our officers... What works for Officer Performance Reports doesn't necessarily work for these."

The information contained in this brief is nothing more than one panel member's opinions, thoughts, and observations. I'm sure other panel members had a slightly different perspective. My views do not necessarily represent the official Air Force or Board Secretariat's position.

Highly Professional Board. The board was conducted in a highly professional manner. The Board President read CSAF's formal charge and we, board members and observers, took an oath to uphold the charge. The Board Secretariat's entire staff were also a class act! They presented the

board informative briefings and useful information.

Dispelling Rumors. We DIDN'T receive instructions to give special consideration to minorities, young SMSgts, fast burners, those reaching their HYT, those with 4-star generals as senior raters, or anyone else.

Board Honeymoon. We were given sufficient time to get acquainted with the scoring process. First, we scored inactive records from a previous board. Then we graduated to a select group of active records we would see later. This provided two things for each panel. First, it establish a benchmark for average records. From there, we could subjectively raise and lower scores based on record content. We used a tried and true scoring range of 6.0 to 10.0, in half point increments. And secondly, the exercise prepared us for resolving future split votes.

OBSERVATIONS & THOUGHTS.

The Front Side of EPR. We used the "whole person" concept when scoring records. We looked at— demonstrated leadership, job performance, professional competence, level of responsibility, breadth of experience, awards and decorations, and finally, education.

A mark down in any area was hard to overcome. The more recent the report ,the more of a negative impact this had. Most panel members realized some folks got a raw deal during the 89/90 year group transition from APRs to EPRs. We took this into account. Homesteading and jobsteading are still taboo. Some people have stronger opinions than others so don't take the chance? Move around and gain experience. If you must stay in one location then change jobs. It's impressive to see someone demonstrating continued excellence while serving for different supervisors, in different locations, with different challenges, and handling various levels of responsibility. Also, the Board members realized a number of reasons have caused some SMSgts to work in a 7-level position so the DAFSC didn't play much of a part in scoring.

Seeds of Doubt. Try not to create questions for the Board, anywhere in the EPR starting with the duty description. If your unit is selectively manned it should be mentioned. If the duty title is equivalent to a Chief's billet, the DAFSC should state it and/or be listed in the SNCO brief, otherwise the Board is going to start asking questions about your entire record. We saw too many "made up" duty titles which we found troubling. "Assistant Security Forces Manager", what is that?!! The corresponding duty description didn't meet the expectation of this duty title. We saw the title, "Superintendent" used too often when the description didn't warrant the title. I suggest all career fields review AFI 36-2618 concerning the use of "Superintendent". We, as a group, relayed our dismay with all the duty title irregularities to the Board President, and suggested our comments be pass on to the CSAF so titles can be standardized!

Your duty title should accurately describe your level of responsibility... number supervised, $$$, at what level did your decisions make an impact (squadron, wing, AOR, MAJCOM, or AF). Write descriptions so someone outside your career field can understand it. Some duty titles were changed every reporting period but the descriptions stayed the same. Cute? I don't think so. The panel saw right through this, and it created a "seed of doubt" about jobsteading.

Reverse Side of EPR & Data Verification Record (DVR). Raters should review the ratee's records before writing the EPR so accomplishments or statements aren't repeated. It looks funny when exact statements are used from year to year, and it calls into question the rater's integrity. Be descriptive, show impact, and be enthusiastic! Try to persuade the reader this is the person to promote.

Who did we promote to CMSgt? Leaders. It was refreshing to read about a leader in action cultivating his troops talents resulting in the troops winning awards and being recognized for their accomplishments. Simply put, super-grade technicians didn't fair very well.

An Associates degree from CCAF is extremely valuable and demonstrates a commitment on your part to broaden your horizons. Additional education is beneficial, but by itself won't necessarily get you a good board score. Ensure your records accurately and consistently reflect degree work. Too often an EPR reflected the ratee working on a degree but the SNCO brief didn't contain this info.

Sustained excellence in many different assignments and jobs, was a real eye opener. Awards, including PME recognition, were ways for the board to discriminate the above average record from average ones. Don't make the board guess about awards... are they national or local level awards? For a non-security force member what would the "Julie Y. Cross Memorial" award signify? For team awards, say how the ratee contributed to the award beyond being assigned to the team or section. Questions were raised when someone went PCS and didn't get a medal, or received one that was less than commensurate with their level of responsibility. If someone deserves an extended tour medal, then award it!

The most misguiding statements dealt with PME. Don't hide PME awards. These *must* be in the senior rater block! Also, there were too many statements like "graduated in top XX% with a 94.6% average (bottomline, they weren't a DG). If they weren't an award winner, it is best to provide significant accomplishments at a school... 'filled a leadership position conducting retreat,' 'committee leader,' 'organized an event in the community,' etc.

Far too often feedback wasn't given as indicated on the EPR. Different reasons were cited; supervisors must work harder to ensure their people receive feedback so they can grow.

Show a history of community involvement. There is more impact if the person filled a leadership role in the community activity, but some role is better than no role. Some EPRs didn't contain any community involvement... is the ratee filling the "whole person concept"?

Speak for your level. A captain saying, "With two more like her, I could run the AF", or an OIC saying, "Best in the Wing" doesn't mean much. Defer these comments to senior raters.

Quantify your numbers so a board member can easily see what you're saying. "Senior NCO of the Year - one of top 10 of 110" Paint a pretty good picture, but it's probably better to say #1 of 25 Senior NCOs than #1 in the NAF... now we have to figure out how many Senior NCOs are in the NAF. Also, not everyone can be #1... #2 or #3 of 55 is still good. I saw two separate senior raters

state, "My #1 SMSgt" for different ratees. This can be embarrassing for the senior rater and disastrous for the ratee. The Board is left to pick who was #1 or #2, or to just to completely discount the senior rater's evaluation. Rater/senior rater integrity is very important. I applaud raters for stating why they marked down an area!

Some statements that did nothing for me and prompted questions: "A Chief in waiting", "Performing like a Chief", "Continue to Challenge", "Future CMSAF", and "One of the best..."

Use the hardest hitting material in the Senior Rater's block. Too often awards, PME recognition, and super bullets were hidden in the Rater's block where the board could miss it. Senior raters should not repeat what the rater mentioned... makes you wonder if the person did enough and is responsible for enough to fill up the EPR. This is especially underscored when the senior rater was the rater's rater and the bottom block wasn't filled in. I didn't feel the rank of the senior rater had any bearing on the score, just as long as the senior rater signed the EPR and stated significant accomplishments. Sometimes a SMSgt will rate on one or more other SMSgt(s). This did not have a negative impact, overall, I say the Board still looked for all the ingredients needed in a strong record.

Here are some examples of very weak statements in an endorser's block: 'Yard of the Month', 'Volunteered to remove the cover on the base swimming pool', and ergometry test scores. Speaking of very weak, I'd stay away from "sports" analogies... "Blue Chip", "fourth and goal, give him the ball", "first draft pick", "when the chips are down I give him the ball", "win, place, or show...". Trite, trite, trite. We didn't see too many acronyms that weren't explained. Raters are doing a better job in this area than they did years ago.

WHAT YOU CAN DO

Review your record ensuring it is correct. Check out the Senior NCO Fact Sheet available at http://www.afpc.af.mil. You can correct "suspect" info by going through this process. I saw missing and suspect data in more records than I cared to see. Then review your Data Verification Record (DVR). These steps can save you heartache in the long run— remember it is your career.

The entire process strengthened my faith in the enlisted promotion system and reinforced what I heard about the board process. We weren't rushed and had plenty of time to review each record thoroughly. I'm very fortunate to have sat on the board and to have seen first-hand, the records of our extremely talented force! Although the competition was tough, I'm confident we played a significant part in selecting the best senior NCOs to lead us into the 21st century.

Now I'm trying to get the word out in the hopes of making ratees, rater's raters, and senior raters smarter about the board process. I highly encourage you to forward this info to your bosses. Your supervisors control what is contained in your EPRs. You can help them out and your career by educating them on this extremely important process.

Random Notes

Santa's Check Ride. Santa Claus, like all pilots, gets regular visits from the Federal Aviation Administration, and it was shortly before Christmas when

the FAA examiner arrived.

In preparation, Santa had the elves wash the sled and bathe all the reindeer. Santa got his logbook out and made sure all his paperwork was in order.

The examiner walked slowly around the sled. He checked the reindeer harnesses, the landing gear, and Rudolf's nose. He painstakingly reviewed Santa's weight and balance calculations for the sled's enormous payload. Finally, they were ready for the checkride. Santa got in, fastened his seatbelt and shoulder harness and checked the compass. Then the examiner hopped in, carrying to Santa's surprise, a shotgun. "What's that for?" asked Santa incredulously. The examiner winked and said, "I'm not supposed to tell you this, but you're gonna lose an engine on takeoff."

Merry Christmas To All, And To All A Good Night.